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Media Release

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i Source: [Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2021](#)

Managers and Professionals had the highest average hourly earnings of all occupations in May 2021, according to detailed earnings information released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

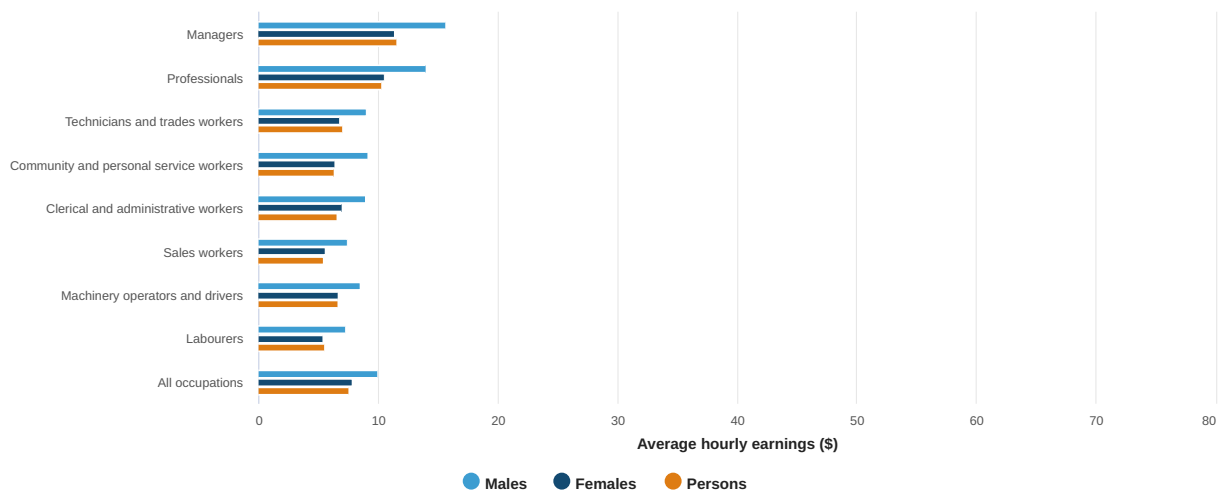
Managers had an average hourly earnings of \$65.10 and Professionals \$57.90, compared with an overall average of \$42.50, while Sales workers and Labourers had the lowest average hourly earnings (\$30.50 and \$31.00).

Bjorn Jarvis, head of labour statistics at the ABS, said: "Hourly earnings comparisons are useful in understanding gender pay differences, beyond weekly earnings measures, given men are more likely to work full-time than women.

"On average, men earned \$44.50 an hour, compared to \$40.20 an hour for women. Average hourly earnings were higher for men than women in all eight occupation groups.

"In dollar terms, the difference between male and female average hourly earnings was greatest for Managers (\$11.50) and Professionals (\$8.50), and lowest for Machinery operators and drivers (\$3.80). In percentage terms, the difference was greatest for Community and personal service workers (19 per cent) and Managers (16 per cent), and lowest for Machinery operators and drivers (10 per cent)."

Average hourly earnings - occupation by sex



In weekly terms, employees in May 2021 earned an average of \$1,394, with men earning an average of \$1,625 and women \$1,167.

"The majority of full-time employees are men (62 per cent) and they have higher average earnings (\$1,934 per week) compared with women who work full-time (\$1,676 per week)," Mr Jarvis said.

"Women make up the majority of part-time employees (69 per cent) with slightly higher weekly earnings, on average, than men working part-time (\$746 compared to \$722). This reflects the greater use of part-time working arrangements by women than men in higher paying jobs."

Distributional data showed that the top quarter of earners in Australia received more than \$1,814 per week in May 2021, while the lowest earning quarter of employees received less than \$750. Median weekly earnings were \$1,209.

The most common method of setting pay in 2021 was an individual arrangement (38 per

cent, up from 37 per cent in 2018), followed by a collective agreement (35 per cent, down from 38 per cent in 2018).

Less than a quarter of employees were paid according to an award (23 per cent, up from 21 per cent in 2018). A small proportion of employees were owner managers of incorporated enterprises (4 per cent in both 2021 and 2018) who set their own pay.

"Men were more likely to have their pay set by an individual arrangement (44 per cent), whereas the most common method for women was a collective agreement (39 per cent)," Mr Jarvis said.

Media notes

- The Survey of Employee Earnings and Hours is usually conducted every two years with a May reference period. It was postponed from May 2020 to May 2021, due to the labour market impacts and disruption from the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Data were collected for the week ending 21 May 2021, at which point there were no lockdowns in place.
- Hourly earnings are for non-managerial employees (that is, employees who do not have strategic management responsibilities).
- These statistics provide detailed compositional insights into hourly and weekly earnings for men and women, including information by age, occupation, industry, sector, state/territory of work, type of employment and pay-setting method. They are the best source of information for measuring hourly earnings differences between men and women in Australia, and complement a range of other related statistics produced by the ABS (e.g. Average Weekly Earnings and Characteristics of Employment) and the Workplace Gender Equality Agency.
- Estimates of earnings and employee proportions in this media release have been rounded, where applicable.
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